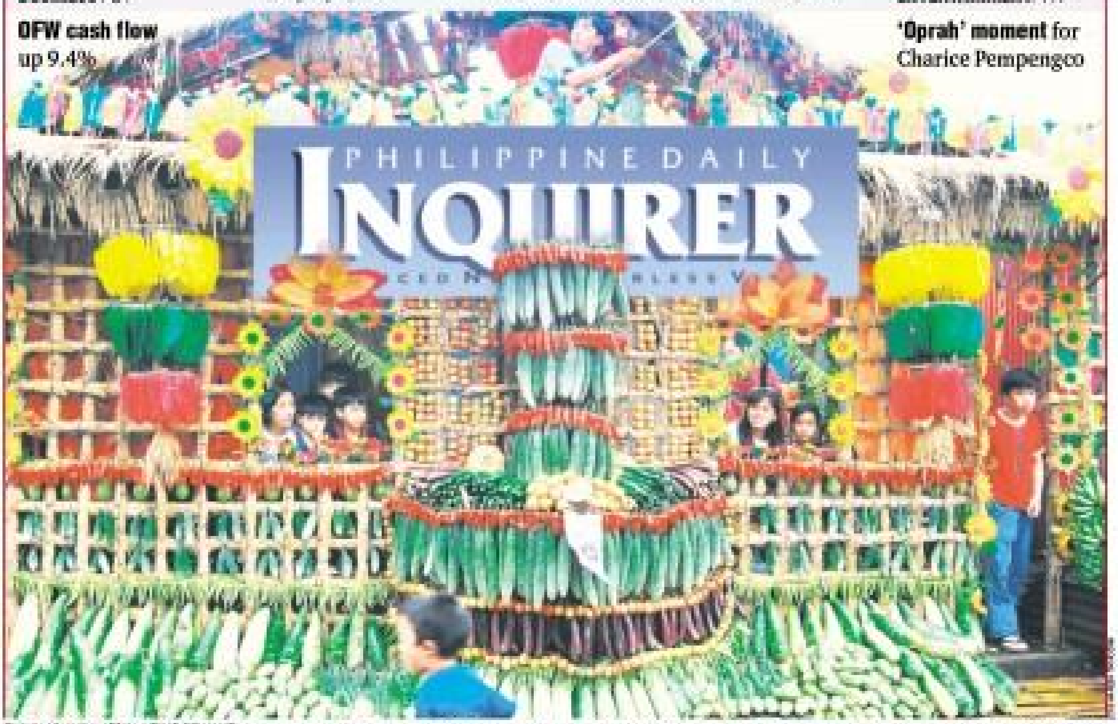
OFW cash flow up 9.4%

'Oprah' moment for Charice Pempengco

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER



THINK ABUNDANCE IN A TIME OF WANT Every year on May 15, residents of Lucban, Quezon, go to town decorating the façades of their homes with every bounty that comes from their farms—vegetables, fruits and the rice paper "kiping" in the colors of the rainbow. This is how the farmers say thanksgiving on the feast day of their patron saint, San Isidro de Labrador, the patron of farmers. The fiesta has become a favorite tourist destination since the late 1960s.

₱20 wage hike in Metro

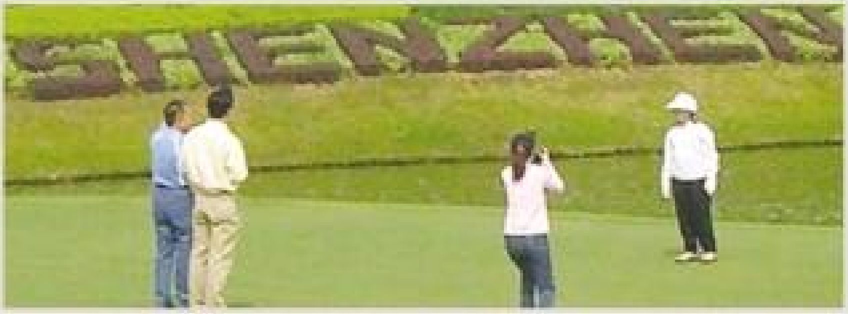
Analysts say raise even if small will add to inflation

By Michael Lim Ubac and Jeannette I. Andrade

JUMPING THE GUN ON THE wage board in Metro Manila, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday excitedly announced before employers that the tripartite body had approved a ₱20 increase in the daily minimum wage of private workers, or ₱600 per month, to allow them to cope with soaring fuel and food prices.

The President also said the wage board in Northern Mindanao (Region X) had agreed on a ₱16 increase or "part of the integrated

₱20 WAGE/A4



NOV. 2, 2006 GMA poses for a souvenir photo taken by a woman from ZTE at the Shenzhen golf course while then Speaker Jose de Venecia and another ZTE official look on. The leisurely interlude happened 5 months before the $329-M NBN project was awarded to ZTE. This picture was provided by Iloilo Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico.

ZTE meet hush-hush, says JDV wife

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S golf game and lunch meeting with ZTE Corp. officials in Shenzhen, China, on Nov. 2, 2006, were so "hush-hush" that even the wife of then Speaker Jose de Venecia was not allowed to join the group.

In a phone interview with the Inquirer yesterday from New York, Gina de Venecia said: "Everything was done in a hush-hush [manner]. Nakakahalata nga na parang nagtatago sila (It looked like they were hiding something).

"Usually she (the President) takes me with her, but this time she only took Joe with her. The protocol [people] told me I was not included in the group. They gave me another car so I just went around Shenzhen."

Gina de Venecia confirmed that her husband was among those who went with the First Couple and then Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos when Ms Arroyo played golf with ZTE officials at the Shenzhen Golf Club and had lunch with them at ZTE headquarters later.

But she took issue with Malacañang's

ZTE MEET/A20

'Why did GMA not admit ZTE meet sooner?'

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO yesterday continued to draw flak for meeting with ZTE Corp. officials in Shenzhen, China, five months before the $329-million National Broadband Network (NBN) project was awarded to the Chinese telecommunications firm.

Iloilo Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico, whose witness had presented pictures of the First Couple at

WHY DID/A4

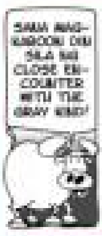
No transmission lines to deliver IPP power—Meralco

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PROBLEM BACK THEN WAS NOT IN the generation side but the unavailability of transmission lines to connect First Gas' power plants to the grid.

"This was a problem that had been much discussed and well-covered by the media. Everything that we did and every contract that we had was scrutinized extensively by regulators," according to Elpi Cuna, Meralco corporate communications director.

NO TRANSMISSION/A11



Aliens regular visitors to UK . . . they're all green

LONDON—ALIENS FROM outer space have been visiting Britain for years and UFO sightings doubled after the film "Close Encounters" was released in 1977, according to secret files collating reports by members of the public.

The alien craft come in all

ALIENS/A20

Unspeakable grief: Too many dead are children

JUYUAN, CHINA—THE BODIES are everywhere. Some are zipped inside white vinyl bags and strewn on the floor. Others have been covered in a favorite blanket or dressed in new clothes. There are so many bodies that undertakers want to cremate them in groups.

They are all children.

"Our grief is incomparable," Li Ping, 39, said. His eyes rimmed red, as he and his wife slowly, carefully pulled a pair of pink pajamas over the bruised, naked body of their 8-year-old daughter, Ke.

"We got married late, and had a child late. She is our only child," Li said.

The earthquake that struck Sichuan province on Monday has so far claimed 15,000 lives

UNSPEAKABLE/A11

Junta claims big poll win amid rising death toll

RANGOON, BURMA—THE MILITARY junta in Burma (Myanmar) yesterday announced that a new constitution had won overwhelming support in a referendum that was held while the country was reeling from a devastating cyclone that the Red Cross says may have killed up to 128,000 people.

State radio said 92.4 percent of the 22 million eligible voters approved the constitution and

JUNTA/A11

Gov't urged to ax 'absurd' VAT on systems losses

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE FEDERATION OF PHILIPPINE Industries has called on the Department of Finance to correct the "inadvertent levying" of the value-added tax (VAT) on Manila Electric Co.'s systems losses that has contributed to high power rates.

Jesus L. Arranza, president of the umbrella organization for 131 industry groups and individual companies, said in a letter on May 12 to Finance Secretary Margarito B. Teves that it was "absurd" to levy taxes on losses, more so when the cause was theft.

Systems losses are those incurred because of theft and pilferage of electricity or technical problems, such as friction of power cables that reduce the amount of electricity in the process of delivering it to end users.

The antipilferage law of 1994, or Republic Act No. 7832, penalizes the theft of electricity usually done either by using "jumper" cables to bypass meters in households or making illegal connections to power posts. The law allows Meralco to pass on to consumers up to 9.5 percent of the stolen amount, electric cooperatives up to 14 percent.

The Electric Power Industry

GOV'T/A11

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

SUPERLOTTO 6/49

P91,272,103.20

RP told to focus on peace talks

Int'l think-tank warns against peril of Abu-MILF tie-up

THE PHILIPPINES AND THE United States need to focus again on the peace process in Mindanao or risk pushing remnants of the extremist Abu Sayyaf to join forces with other larger Muslim insurgent movements, according to an international conflict think-tank.

MILF sanctuary

Supportive populations

WHAT'S INSIDE

Full steam ahead for ARMM polls automation – Melo

RP improves global competitiveness ranking by 5 notches

By Michelle V Remo

AFTER ACHIEVING A RECORD economic growth last year, the Philippines' global competitiveness ranking improved five notches to 40th among 55 countries surveyed.

This is according to the 2008 World Competitiveness Yearbook published annually by the Swiss-based business school International Institute for Management Development. More details about the survey is expected to be officially announced in the coming days.

The publication acknowledged the Philippines' achievement in the macro-economic front, including its 7.3 percent gross domestic product growth last year. The growth figure, the highest in 31 years, prompted Philippine government officials to declare that the country was no longer a laggard in Asia.

The Philippines likewise posted a relatively low inflation rate of only 2.8 percent last year despite skyrocketing prices of oil. This was made possible partly by the strong peso, which made imported goods cheaper.

The peso was the strongest performing Asian currency last year, appreciating by about 18 percent against the US dollar.

The Philippine government was also able to significantly trim its budget deficit last year to only P12.4 billion from P64.8 billion the previous year. This was achieved through higher tax collection and sale of state-owned assets.

The Arroyo administration said 2007 was a good year for the Philippines amid the improved macro-economic fundamentals, rise in foreign remittances, and higher portfolio and foreign direct investments.

The competitiveness survey takes into account four major areas in determining the rankings of the 55 participating countries: economic performance, government efficiency, business efficiency and infrastructure.

The World Competitiveness Yearbook serves as a guide to foreign investors as to the desirability of the investment climate of a country.

The United States remained the No. 1 most competitive country, a spot it has held for 15 consecutive years. Singapore landed at the No. 2 spot, and Hong Kong grabbed third.

Doubts on the ability of the United States to keep the top spot in next year's competitiveness yearbook were raised in the wake of a tough economic environment.

PRIVATE SECTOR IMPORTATION

NFA putting out new rice tender

By [illegible]

[illegible]

'Open' importation

[illegible]

[illegible] of palay

[illegible]







Why flowers bloom soon, autumn leaves fall late, polar bears going

WASHINGTON—HUMAN-GENERATED climate change made flowers bloom sooner and autumn leaves fall later, turned some polar bears into cannibals and serial birds into early breeders, a vast global study reported on Wednesday.

The US government on Wednesday also declared the polar bear a threatened species because of the loss of Arctic sea ice but also cautioned the decision should not be viewed as a path to address global warming.

Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne cited dramatic declines in sea ice over the last three decades and projections of continued losses, meaning, he said, that the polar bear is a species likely to be in danger of extinction in the near future.

Previous studies have noted specific changes in the natural world and more suggested a link to so-called anthropogenic (human-caused) global warming, but a new analysis published in the British journal Nature correlated these earlier studies with changes in temperature, the study's lead author said.

There was a close relationship between temperature shifts between 1970 and 2004 and changes in plants, animals and the physical world, such as the retreat of glaciers and the water level in desert lakes, the study found.

"When you look at all of the glaciers and all of the snowpack and all of the birds laying eggs earlier and all of the plants leafing going earlier across a continent, then we see we can detect anthropogenic signals," said Cynthia Rosenzweig of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies.

The link between human-caused global warming—generated by industrial and vehicle emissions of carbon dioxide to produce a temperature-boosting greenhouse effect—and observed biological and physical changes is very strong, Rosenzweig said.

Cannibal bears, early birds

Going continent by continent, here are some observed changes in the natural world attributable to climate change, according to the study.

- North America—Earlier plant flowering of 89 species from American holly to mistletoe, intraspecific predation, cannibalism and declining population of polar bears, earlier breeding and arrival dates of birds including robins and Canada geese.
- Europe—Glacier melting in the Alps; changes in 39 countries of leaf-unfolding and flowering of such plants as hazel, lilac, apple, linden and birch; early pollen release in the Netherlands; long-term changes in fish communities in Upper Rhone River.
- Asia—Greater growth of Siberian pines in Mongolia; earlier breakup and thinning of river and lake ice in Mongolia; change in frozen depth of permafrost in Russia; earlier flowering of gingko in Japan.
- South America—Glacier wastage in Peru; melting Patagonia ice fields contributing to sea level rise.
- Africa—Decreasing aquatic ecosystem productivity of Lake Tanganyika.
- Australia—Early arrival of migratory birds including flycatchers and cuckoos; declining water levels in Western Victoria.
- Antarctica—50-percent decline in population of emperor penguins on Antarctic Peninsula, retreating glaciers.

29,000 sets of data

Building on research done to support findings reported in 2007 by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Rosenzweig and her coauthors brought together nearly 30,000 sets of data about biological and physical changes around the world.

They then matched that up with a detailed database of global temperature change.

"We overlay those two global datasets and then we do a special pattern analysis globally about the co-location of significant temperature trends and observed changes consistent with warming," Rosenzweig said in a telephone interview. "We see that those are strongly colocated."

On a global scale, the correlation is more than 90 percent between the two factors; on a continental scale, she said, the correlation is very likely between 90 and 99 percent.

Beyond UN's landmark report

The wide-scale study has strengthened warnings, spelt out last year by UN scientists, that climate change is already on the march. It goes beyond the scope taken by a landmark report issued by the IPCC in February 2007.

In that document, the IPCC said manmade global warming was "likely"—within a probability of 66-90 percent—to have had a "discernible" effect on many physical and biological systems.

Critics of the IPCC report have variously argued that the perceptible warming that has occurred over the last three decades is due to natural causes, such as volcanic eruptions or changes in solar radiation, or to the effect of deforestation and other changes in land use.

The new paper rejects this, saying the changes in Earth's natural systems cannot be explained by such factors, and only manmade warming could be the culprit.

The US Department of State outlined a set of administrative actions and limits to how it planned to protect the polar bear with its new status so that it would not have "wide-ranging adverse impact on economic activities from building power plants to oil and gas exploration."

Kempthorne said it would be "wholly inappropriate" to use the protection of the bear to reduce greenhouse gases, or to broadly address climate change.

Bush and the bear

The Endangered Species Act "is not the right tool to set US climate policy," said Kempthorne, reflecting a view recently expressed by President George W. Bush.

"This listing will not stop global climate change or prevent any sea ice from melting," Kempthorne said. He said he had consulted with the White House on the decision, but "at no time was there ever a suggestion that this was not my decision."

Bear population declining

Kempthorne cited conclusions by department scientists that sea ice loss will likely result in two-thirds of the polar bears disappearing by mid-century.

The bear population across the Arctic from Alaska to Greenland doubled from about 12,000 to 25,000 since 1960, but he noted that scientists now predict a significant population decline.

Studies last year by the US Geological Survey suggested 16,000 bears would be lost in coming decades with those in the western Hudson Bay area of Alaska and Canada under the greatest stress. *—Reports from Reuters, AFP and AP*



THREATENED SPECIES. So declares the US Department of Interior due to the decline in Arctic sea ice from global warming. On Wednesday it cites dramatic declines in sea ice over the last three decades and projections of continued losses.

24 RP fishers held in Sabah

With Naia3 still closed, domestic airport to have 'budget' terminal

LPG plant told to pay fire victim

NEW ARMY CHIEF'S MESSAGE

'Soldiers need reminding on HR'



Top election lawyer takes oath at CHR

Everybody's concern

Bayani Abadilla, journalist-poet; 67



‘Why did GMA not admit ZTE meet sooner?’



GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

Never mentioned it before

‘Admission of allegations’

Questions

Full disclosure

Ground rules

‘It’s all connected’

₱20 wage hike for workers in Metro Manila

[illegible]

Inflationary

[illegible]

'Within assumptions'

[illegible]

Dampening effect on growth

[illegible]

Doomsday scenario

[illegible]

Doomsday scenario

[illegible]

Calabarzon's hikes

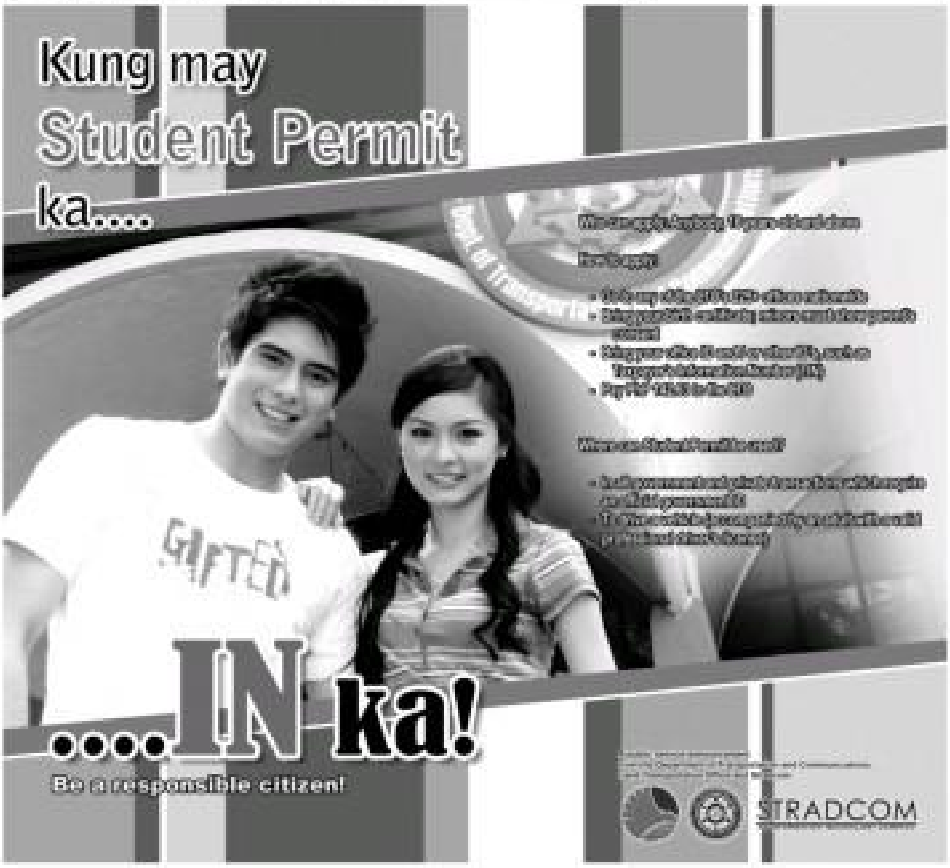
[illegible]

Exemptions

[illegible]

Filipinos getting better in English, says survey

The Daily Gospel



Gov't doubles grant to scholars

By Michael Lim Ubac

[illegible]



Junta claims big poll win amid rising death toll



Asean team

Only 270,000

Mockery of democracy



GO FURTHER WITH YOUR FREE FUEL!

3rd Draw Winners of Shell's "Win Free Fuel and a House" Raffle Promo

METRO MANILA

Alma Donayre
Antonio de Vera Sr.
Apolonio Catapang
Cristina San Andres
Danilo Enriquez
Dean Mejos
Edgar Tabo
Edgardo Tapacio
Eduardo Donado
Elizabeth Ong
Gloria Langaan
Henry Eduarte
Joana Prado
Joel Domingo
Joel Santiago
Jonathan Leonardo
Joselito Correy
Jovito Macatintal
Lene Salas
Luisa Sia Chua
Ma. Teresita Dean
Maria Delia Garcia
Mary Ann Prado
Michael Carean
Nancy San Jose
Neil Marquez
Noel Cunanan
Priscilla Anne Guevarra
Rexie Umerez
Ria Marcha
Rogelio Sevilla
Rowena Salatasare
William Tah
Winefreda Go
Zosimo Gamez

NORTH LUZON

Adelaida Manalast
Analin Montalbo
Ang Jassie Ng
Annie Rivera
Catherine Benoso
Dominador Ildefonso Jr.
Efren Cabacangan
Emilio Agustin
Enrique Lozanes
Erdie Soriano
Eugenio Mandones
Geraldine Gan
Germelyn Cortezi
Glenda de Leon
Harry Dy
Joan de Polonia
Jose Cuenanes Jr.
Juancho de Guzman
Juliet Rivera
Khareen Francisco
Marina Fernandez
Mark Frederick Saporno
Maximo Camara Jr.
Merle Williams
Michael Say Saldva
Milvia Aysan
Narciso Martinez Jr.
Orlando Roura
Pederick Mendoza
Reynaldo Payawal
Ricky Agustino
Roberto Dizon
Rodel Fajardo
Rodolfo Ocampo
Ruben Payat
Ryan Luna
Salcedo Roger Fernando
Samuel Perlin
Walter Murag
Wenie Portido

SOUTH LUZON

Aimee Jeanette Espayno
Aldwin Ossyin
Araceli Chua
Carlito Reyes
Cesar Lara
Cliff Hershey Gullo
Conrado Platon
Corazon Cleofe
Eduardo Morales
Eugene Mitura
Evelyn Salcedo
Ezequiel dela Torre
Jamie Pontanal
Julius Villagracia
Liberato Arpon
Lina Loritto
Lorenzo Arboz
Lorenzo Bernabe
Mercy Dehesa
Michael Mirasol
Nomer Chavez
Pedro de Guzman
Pio Aranas
Prudencia Cabugon
Rodolfo Baldoza
Rolando Santos
Rorie Bernadin
Salvador San Gaspar Jr.
Saturnino Danlay
Wilfredo Pragol

VISAYAS

Almer Benjas
Antipas Orcena
Arnel Jimenez
Benedict Hong
Cecilia Evangelio
Celerina Cristiano
Chara April Danlag
Constancio Autero
Edna Ortiz
Erwin Pereira
Estanislao Saldivia Jr.
Evelyn Villaruz
Fatima Javier
Gia Wynola Cuaton
Han Hue Go
Jean Alveth Bejoc
Joana Rosay
Jasmarie Diano
Leonora Abella
Luis Caadan
Ma. Hayde Tan
Ma. Socorro Nadonales
Nerissa Rosende
Oscar Tormenta
Ramon Erasmo
Rene Oncamos Jr.
Richard Ramos
Rodel Mahilan Balaga
Romeo Villanueva
Rona Gulaman

MINDANAO

Abdulgabbar Sultan
Aileen Mapatac
Alfredo Toral
Arnel Carlos
Aurie Zalcas
Bayan Manap
Daniel Young
Eduardo Hao
Elena Dagoy
Estela Taga
Eugene Ernest Lood
Imelda Llagas
Jeremaine Go
Joey Cabarrubias
Jonathan Parla Sr.
Jose Nim Oria
Jay Ebalbr
Katrina Luisa Saavedra
Lauro Banggat Sr.
Maimonah Amber Abubacar
Morgan Dura
Marlin Edie Llameta
Marvin John Gayta
MYNE Store and APAS FARM
Oscar Castillo
Placido Jabines Sr.
Roberto Albina Jr.
Romeo Lanaza
Salvador Concordia
Shirley Clavez

Formal notification will be sent via registered mail to the winners by May 19, 2008.

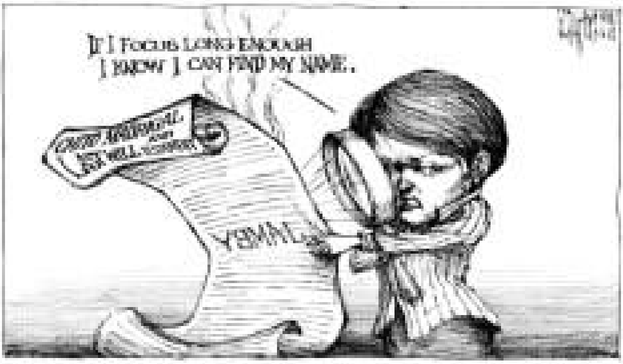
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

In denial

EDITORIALS

In transit



Lift royalty on natural gas and EVAT on oil

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

Burma: Nature's wrath, junta's indifference

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

Predatory birds

Analysis

Amando Doronila



From Middle Israel to Middle Palestine

World View

Fania Oz-Salzberger

Names as intro to personal history

Looking Back

Ambeth R. Ocampo



Exotic foods

Pinoy Kasi

Michael L. Tan



Probe of Meralco should include 'deposit fees' for meters

LETTERS

AFP has made a significant impact on Sulu



CALL for an end to rice crisis from peasant women marked this year's Mother's Day.

How to encourage farmers to produce rice

Across the NATION

Mayor ruling Boracay sued for graft

By Jocelyn R. Uy

MALAY MAYOR CECIRON CAWALING IS FACING a graft complaint before the Office of the Ombudsman for his failure to control the construction frenzy on Boracay Island.

[illegible]

Undue advantage

[illegible]

Abuse of authority

[illegible]

'Boracay is not his'

[illegible]

Davao farmer leader gunned down

[illegible]

'We cannot be scared by this nor can we be stopped. We are no cowards...'

[illegible]



Anti-'jueteng' cop more senior than PNP choice



NBI nabs village exec for 'swertres'

NEWSBRIEFS

LEGAZPI CITY

Navy resumes search for missing girl

ZAMBOANGA CITY

Waves destroy houses as typhoon strikes

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna

Lone gunman shoots, wounds HR manager

ILOILO CITY

Capiz execs seek help for farmers

BACOLOD CITY

18-yr-old maid's body found in subdivision area



FILIPINO AUDITORS ON TOP OF THE WORLD

























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Continuation on Page 20

ZTE meet hush-hush, says JDV wife; BOT contract goes G-to-G

(From page A1)
statement that the trip was not a junket or boondoggle.

She said her husband—who is in Russia for a speaking engagement—would talk about the trip "in the proper forum."

Staunch allies

Gina de Venecia said she and her husband were in Hong Kong for All Saints' Day in 2006 because they had not been observing the holiday in the Philippines since the tragic death of their young daughter KC on Dec. 26, 2004.

On Nov. 1, Ms Arroyo invited the De Venecias to the Four Seasons hotel, where the President was staying after her official trip to China that week.

They heard Mass, and lit candles for KC as well as for Ms Arroyo's mother, Eva Macapagal.

The De Venecias were then staunch allies of the President, and the Speaker's wife was the latter's frequent travel companion.

When they returned to the Four Seasons for lunch, Ms Arroyo invited De Venecia to play golf at Shenzhen and have lunch with ZTE officials the following day.

Gina de Venecia said she and her husband were not even prepared for the trip. "We said we had no Chinese visa and no golf attire."

'The fewer, the better'

The protocol people took their passports to get the visas for Shenzhen, she said.

But on the morning of Nov. 2, Gina de Venecia was surprised upon being told that she could not join her husband and Ms Arroyo's party at the golf game and lunch at the ZTE headquarters.

The President's party left in a white Coaster.

In a separate vehicle, Gina de Venecia went around Shenzhen while waiting for her husband, who returned late in the afternoon.

Asked why she was left behind, she said: "Maybe the fewer people were with them, the better for them."

She said Ms Arroyo probably took then Speaker De Venecia with her to impress upon the ZTE officials that his son and namesake would no longer get in the way of the Abalos-led lobby for ZTE to get the National Broadband Network (NBN) contract.

'G-to-G'

The NBN contract became a government-to-government deal from a build-operate-transfer project after the President's visit to ZTE, according to Gina de Venecia.

"After that golf game and lunch with the ZTE people, the NBN project became a G-to-G. I was really baffled. And where in the world can you see a President going to the bidder of a multibillion-dollar project? I think there was impropriety there," she said.

Gina de Venecia ventured that Philippine officials had probably received advance grease money from the ZTE people.

"Maybe after that they were given kickbacks because it's been said that for every appearance, they get an appearance fee," she said.

Aliens regular visitors ...

(From page A1)
shapes, sizes and colors but their occupants are uniformly green, the Ministry of Defense files show.

The archives (at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ufos) are the first batch of a four-year release program of all the ministry's UFO files from 1978 to the present day.

But the ministry dismisses 90 percent of the reports as having mundane explanations and leaves 10 percent with a question mark and the assurance they are no defense threat.

The files were released a day after reports quoted a Vatican astronomer as saying there is no conflict between believing in God and in the possibility of intelligent life on other planets that is perhaps even more evolved than humans.

"Just as there is a multiplicity of creatures on earth, there can be other beings, even intelligent, created by God," said Rev. Jose Gabriel Funes, a 45-year-old Jesuit priest who heads the Vatican Observatory and a scientific adviser to Pope Benedict.

"This is not in contrast with our faith because we can't put limits on God's creative freedom," Funes said.

'Algar' and 'Malcher'

The declassified UFO files include a 1983 report from a 70-year-old man out fishing at midnight who tells of following aliens in green overalls on to a spaceship and then being told to go away because he was too old and decrepit for their purposes.

Two years later, a typewritten letter to the Ministry of Defense tells of an alien spaceship being shot down in the river Mersey in northern England by another spacecraft and of the author developing a warm friendship with an alien called Algar.

Just as Algar was about to reveal himself to the government he was killed by other aliens, the author of the letter writes.

He was still in telepathic contact with an alien called Malcher from the planet Plutone in the Milky Way, the author adds.

Written at the top of the letter is the terse comment "No reply." The ministry has files on 11,000 sightings dating back to the 1950s. A few of the sightings made it into the national press and all were checked out in case they were Soviet aircraft probing Britain's defenses during the Cold War.

Flying Saucer Party

"Clearly some reports remain unexplained but we have found no evidence that these phenomena represent a threat to national security and therefore cannot justify devoting Defense resources to their investigation," said an official letter in 1985.

The term Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) was coined by a US Air Force report three years after the description "flying saucer" was applied to a sighting in Washington State in June 1947.

In Britain, so worrying was the spate of reports that a secret Flying Saucer Working Party was formed to check them out.

Like the US Air Force, it concluded flying saucers did not exist. But its [illegible] report in 1951 was still classified "secret/discreet" and given very limited circulation.

Bright lights

Not all sightings can be easily dismissed as the work of overwrought or hallucinating minds, or triggered by watching Steven Spielberg's "Close Encounters of the Third Kind."

Royal Air Force personnel, civil aviation pilots and air traffic controllers have all reported sightings, and radar tracks that remain unexplained despite high-level investigation.

Among the most famous was the sighting on two occasions of unexplained bright lights landing near a US air base in Suffolk, eastern England. Even the deputy commander of the base put his name to that 1980 report. [illegible]

GHOST POWER DELIVERIES:
FACT OR FICTION?

First Gas

1st Allegation of Congressman Villafuerte:

*"Notwithstanding the fact that FIRST GAS had only a demonstrated capacity for the period from July to November 2000 rounded to about **300MW**, Meralco willingly paid FIRST GAS the capacity fees and fixed fees equivalent to 1000MW."*

FACT: THE STA. RITA GAS PLANT CAME ON STREAM IN AUGUST 2000. 1000MW WAS ALWAYS AVAILABLE

First Gas has ALWAYS been ready to generate 1000 megawatts (MW) since it went into full commercial operations on August 16, 2000. In fact the first 500MW was available as early as June 16, 2000. This was part of First Gas' commitment to the GOVERNMENT's Malampaya Gas-To-Power Project -- the country's largest integrated investment (US$ 4.5 Billion) to date.

FACT: SUFFICIENT CAPACITY OF NAPOCOR'S TRANSMISSION LINES WAS NOT AVAILABLE.

Did First Gas request to be dispatched higher? YES!

Was First Gas dispatched higher? NO!

Why was First Gas dispatch curtailed?

1. Completion of NAPOCOR's Transmission Line projects (Sucat-Araneta and Dasmarinas-Zapote) **was delayed by over 5 YEARS!**
2. As a result, the 1000MW Sta. Rita plant of First Gas and the 600MW Calaca plant of NAPOCOR were limited to a total combined dispatch of 600-700MW ONLY.

Another example of government inefficiency, the NAPOCOR-IPP 728MW Pagbilao Coal Plant was up and running during the 1st half of 1996. Yet for 1 full year, NAPOCOR has not finished the transmission line.

2nd Allegation of Congressman Villafuerte:

"From December 2000 to November 2001, or for a period of 12 months, Meralco paid First Gas P12.99Billion, or an average of 1.08Billion per month even if First Gas did not deliver to Meralco the equivalent kWh power that Meralco paid for"

FACT: FIRST GAS DELIVERED POWER!

From December 2000 to November 2001, First Gas was paid P9.58Billion for Capacity fees and fixed Operation and Maintenance(O&M) fees and P3.34 Billion for fuel, taxes and other variable charges for POWER THAT WAS ACTUALLY DELIVERED TO AND RECEIVED BY MERALCO!

YES, the First Gas Santa Rita Plant has a take-or-pay provision on capacity charges, **just like all the NAPOCOR IPPs.** Whether or not the plant is dispatched, the capacity payments have to be paid. **Just like all the other IPPs of NAPOCOR** in the country, without this take-or-pay provision, the power plants could never have been financed and built.

Here is a list of the plants that were financed with take-or-pay arrangements in the 1990's.

POWER PLANT	TAKE-OR-PAY?	Government Guarantee	CUSTOMER	OWNER
1000MW Sta. Rita	Yes	NO	Meralco	First Gas
433MW Quezon Power	Yes	NO	Meralco	PMR
1200MW Sual	Yes	Yes	NAPOCOR	MIRANT
215MW Bauang	Yes	Yes	NAPOCOR	BPPC
1200MW Ilijan	Yes	Yes	NAPOCOR	KEPCO
700MW Pagbilao	Yes	Yes	NAPOCOR	MIRANT
140MW Casecnan	Yes	Yes	NAPOCOR	CALIFORNIA ENERGY
650MW Malaya	Yes	Yes	NAPOCOR	KEPCO
345MW San Roque	Yes	Yes	NAPOCOR	MARUBENI
210MW Mindanao Coal	Yes	Yes	NAPOCOR	STEAG

Gov't union slams GSIS chief: Don't use us in proxy war

No transmission lines to deliver . . .

Gov't urged to ax 'absurd' VAT on systems . . .

10 million suffer from China 7.9 magnitude quake

Stench of death

'I'm alive ... I'm so happy'

Foreign relief workers allowed

2 key roads cleared

Hospitals jampacked

Donations

Offers of aid

Unspeakable grief: Too many dead are kids

Indiscriminate cruelty

Local officials blamed

The truth

News


Come Home
Robinsons Malls
Tote around this summer in style.
Tote-ally Summer Promo!
citibank
let's get it done


Smart Buddy
PARA SA MAHILIG MAG-ONLINE...
PHONE NA, PANG-INTERNET PA!
₱4,990 only
₱10/30 mins lang
Kayo go online na... whenever, wherever!
LG
SMART

Aplus

METRO

Editor Ester G. Dipasupil



Demolition creates panic

People feared predictions of a strong earthquake came true

FOR A BRIEF MOMENT YESterday afternoon, office workers near the Parkview building in Makati City thought the text messages warning of an Intensity 6 earthquake was true.

[illegible]



[illegible] from the site of the Parkview building in the center of Makati City's financial district where it collapsed early yesterday afternoon. Demolition work has been ongoing at the site since April.



Task force created to clear fish pens on Laguna Lake

THE LAGUNA LAKE DEVELOPMENT AUthority (LLDA) [illegible]

[illegible]

DID YOU KNOW

[illegible]



Navotas City says goodbye to flood woes with new pumping stations

By Nancy C. Carvajal

City budget



MEGA HALL

NBI arrests dance instructor for wife's death

Demolition creates ...

New traffic scheme aims to ease access to airports

METROBRIEFS

Lim son posts bail

Mandaluyong's 'discipline zone'

Trader kills companion, 'lover'

MLQU Law Class '58 reunion



Government Warning: Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health

The WORLD

WORLDBRIEFS

Curfew in Indian city after blasts kill 63

NYT

Gaza rocket strikes as Bush begins Israel visit

NYT

US oil refiners pinched as demand slips

NYT

12 killed in suspected US strike in Pakistan

AFP

Edwards endorses Obama

WASHINGTON—DEMOCRATIC FRONT-RUNNER Barack Obama has scored a coup in his White House nominating battle against Hillary Clinton by winning the high-profile endorsement of blue-collar champion John Edwards.



AFP

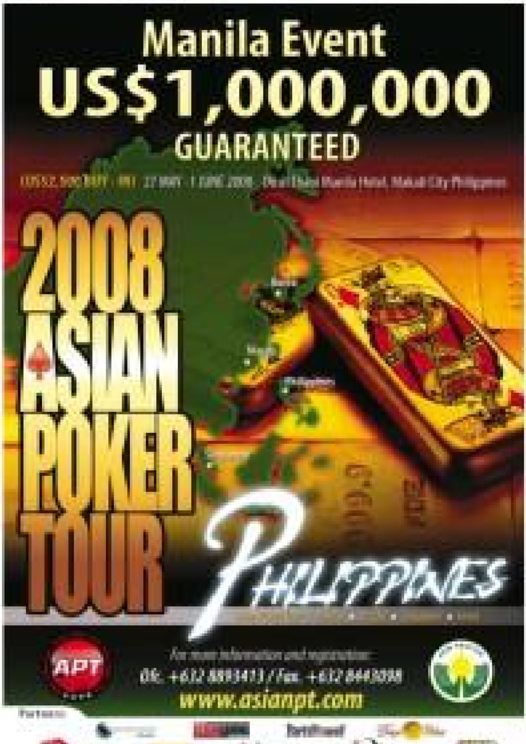
Republicans quake after Democratic election triumph

AFP

SPORTS

Harbour through; Hapee stalled







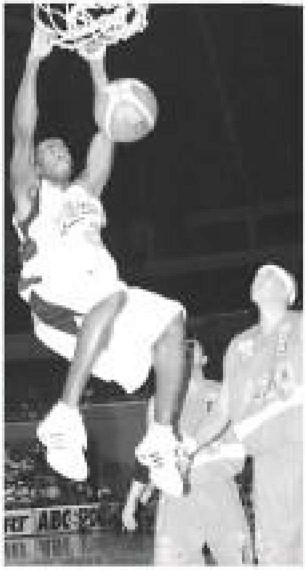




US jungolf tour: Puyat wins twice

Ilustre-Pascua stumbles in Seoul

Tigers prowl for No. 7 vs Express today



Lyceum tries to boot out USLS



RP Olympic hopefuls face tough grind, says Elizalde

JRU forges playoff with LSGH

Marcelo, Benitez pace Shell karting series

Hundred-fight card in Pasay derby today

Henin quits at 25, says fire is gone



HENIN



Lakers, Celts a win shy of finals



LOS ANGELES—PAU GASOL AND LAMAR ODOM picked up the slack with MVP Kobe Bryant slowed by a sore back to lift the Lakers to a 111-104 over the Utah Jazz on Wednesday, putting the home team one win from the Western Conference finals.

Boston 96, Cleveland 89

Federer, Nadal advance

Sharapova moves closer to No. 1

Canoy fights again today

RP holds Tajikistan to nil-nil draw

Near-scuffle mars tight match



Equal chances of qualifying

Filipino's first opportunity

Southwoods keeps Asian Ladies crown

BUSINESS

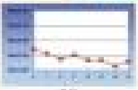
OFW remittances surge 9.4% to $1.4B

1st quarter inflows up 13% at $4B

MONEY SENT HOME BY OVERSEAS FILIPINOS through banks surged 9.4 percent to a new monthly record-high of $1.4 billion in March from a year ago as the country deployed more workers and local banks ramped up their remittance operations, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

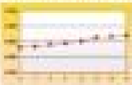
Napocor to reforest watersheds

CURRENCIES



STOCK MARKET

Stocks close higher



ABS-CBN net income down 14%

IN THIS ISSUE

Use 'pork' for rice, solons urged

By Amy R. Remo

THE GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION against Poverty (GCAP) has urged legislators to dedicate part of their pork barrel to projects that will help boost the country's rice output.

Smuggling scandal speech

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

Disappearing goods

Antismuggling success

Recommendation

SMUGGLED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

DATE	PRODUCTS	PLACE	AMOUNT
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
		TOTAL	[illegible]

OFW remittances ...

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Jollibee nets lower in Q1

JOLLIBEE FOODS CORP. SAID ITS NET INCOME IN THE first quarter fell 0.4 percent to P480 million from P520.15 million. Jollibee said its profit margins were trimmed to 6.9 percent from 8.1 percent during the period. Jollibee generated consolidated revenues of P14 billion, 14.8 percent higher than the first quarter of 2007. Total system-wide sales rose 13.2 percent in the first quarter. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lazaro*

PNB posts 48% growth in profits

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK YESTERDAY REPORTED A 48-percent growth in first-quarter net profits, bucking the industry slump. PNB posted a net profit of P407 million in the first quarter, up from P308 million a year ago. The bank also stood out among its peers in the first quarter by posting a 130 percent growth in foreign exchange gains to P571 million over a year ago. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Metrobank income dips

METROPOLITAN BANK AND TRUST CO. YESTERDAY reported that net profits in the first quarter fell by 11.68 percent over a year ago. Net income recorded during the first three months dropped to P1.75 billion from P2.88 billion last year. Total operating income for the quarter grew by 9.13 percent to P8.81 billion. *Doris C. Dumlao*

eTelecare reports higher Q1 revenue

QUEZON CITY-BASED ETELECARE GLOBAL SOLUTIONS reported that its Philippine operations posted a 45-percent increase in revenue in the first quarter to $41.4 million from the year-ago period. eTelecare, which is listed on both the Nasdaq and Philippine bourses, also said that its overall January-March revenue reached a record $73.2 million, increasing 18 percent year-on-year. *Rosnell M. Dumlao*

FPHC reports drastic drop in income

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lazaro

FIRST PHILIPPINE HOLDINGS Corp. reported that its net income dropped 79 percent to P222 million in the first quarter from the same period last year due to foreign exchange losses, higher financing charges and higher provision for taxes.

In its disclosure to the stock exchange, FPHC said it incurred foreign exchange losses of P1.5 billion for the period, apart from higher finance charges of P2.5 billion, it incurred when the holdings firm, along with its power generation subsidiary First Generation Corp., raised debts to fund their respective acquisitions.

First Gen also set aside P1.1 billion in income tax provision after the tax holiday enjoyed by its Santa Rita Power Plant ended in May 2007.

"The overall environment will continue to be challenging with the global economic recession impacting the local economy," FPHC president Elpidio L. Ibañez said.

First Gen, which continues to be FPHC's largest revenue contributor, suffered a 32-percent decline in net income to $16 million.

This was largely due to financial charges it incurred from the purchase of a controlling stake in geothermal power producer PNOC-Energy Development Corp. last year.

On the other hand, its power distribution associate, Manila Electric Co., registered a net income of P955 million—23 percent higher than last year driven primarily by a 3-percent increase in energy sales.

Toll road operator Manila North Tollways Corp. recorded a net income of P420 million, up 6 percent from last year due to lower depreciation and amortization expenses as a result of the adoption of a new accounting standard on service concession arrangements.

FPHC's manufacturing group, First Philippine Electric Corp., showed a net income of P8 million, down 74 percent.

Rockwell Land Corp. continued to register growth with earnings of P181 million, 38 percent higher than last year.









Right of first refusal



Conditions

Computation

Formula

GMA 7 profit up 6% at P453.6M

SMC posts strong Q1 results

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID (IAEB)

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

INVITATION TO BID

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. IV-A

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

ATTY. RICARDO S. MARTINEZ, SR., CESO III
Regional Director

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Convergys' Ayers arriving



GLOBE BUSINESS, MEGALINK STRENGTHEN TIES

New rules of engagement in public relations

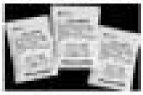


GEVWC FREE MEDICAL AND DENTAL CLINIC



PCCI OFFICERS IN JAPAN MEET

Collagen skin care you can drink



BUSINESS *Friday*



THE INTERACTIVE teaching tool started as a concept developed by Maurice Bolante, a finance professor at the Asian Institute of Management.

'Funance': Fun way to learn finance

By Daniel L. Lucas

Pana turns 50, blacklisting of clients, top paying ad execs

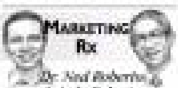

SCENE from McCann San Francisco's X-Box Halo 3 TVC

Euro RSCG bags China

Dry spell for RP

Blacklist of clients

'Why can't we ask advertising to raise sales? If it can't, why advertise at all?'



Dr. Ned Roberto & Andy Roberto

Business

DOF fears ₱12-B loss due to proposed tax relief

Philexim plans ₱3-B bond sale

PHILEXIM PLANS TO RAISE UP TO P3 billion from the sale of peso-denominated bonds in the third quarter.

Philexim is the state firm that guarantees loans obtained by private companies belonging to priority industries.

Francisco Magsajo Jr., newly appointed Philexim president, yesterday said that the state firm plans to expand its guarantee program to cover more viable private sector projects.

"[Philexim] expects to complete the documentary requirements by July and so we should be able to complete it (bond sale) within the third quarter," Magsajo said during a briefing.

Philexim will initially sell P1.5 billion worth of bonds. But Magsajo said it could sell as much as P500 million more should the securities be oversubscribed.

Philexim is now awaiting the approval of the Department of Finance and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas before it pushes through with the bond sale.

Magsajo said Philexim has an outstanding guarantee of P5.9 billion, and intends to guarantee more loans worth P7 billion this year. *Michelle V. Remo*

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE would oppose any move to grant tax relief to all individual taxpayers should Congress fail to come up with an alternative measure that would help generate more revenue for the government.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the proposed tax relief passed by the Lower House would result in potential government revenue losses of up to P12 billion.

Teves said the amount was something the government could not afford to lose at the moment because of rising expenditures needed to keep the economy afloat.

But the DOF is amenable to granting tax exemptions to minimum-wage earners, a move estimated to cut the government's tax collection by only less than a billion pesos, he said.

The House bill the DOF is referring to seeks to raise personal exemption of an individual taxpayer to P50,000.

Currently, an individual enjoys only a P20,000 personal exemption, while head of a family is entitled to P25,000. A married individual is allowed to claim personal exemption of P32,000.

"The amount of revenue to be lost from providing tax relief even to higher-income earners will be substantial," Teves said. "We can only support that if there will be a measure that will help offset the foregone revenues."

The DOF is pushing for the passage of a bill that will enable a simplified net income tax system (Snits), the finance chief said. The system will help raise enough revenue to cover the losses from the proposed tax relief.

Under Snits, self-employed and professional individuals will be entitled to a uniform rate of allowable deduction of 40 percent. This means that 40 percent will be deducted from their income to arrive at the taxable amount of income.

LIFESTYLE

Is lingerie all about pleasing the man—or the woman herself?

Meet Canada's 'Victoria Secret'

By Cheche V. Moral

WHEN A LINGERIE brand puts the idea of pleasing a man ahead of what an undergarment means to a woman, then it gets it all wrong and backward.

The success of La Senza, Canada's leading lingerie brand, owes to its getting the formula right: first, for women to please themselves, second to have something to show off to their friends, and only third to please their men.

La Senza launched Tuesday the first of its four stores to open in the Philippines this year. The outlet, at Bonifacio High Street, is the latest



Why JC Buendia's designs suit even GMA







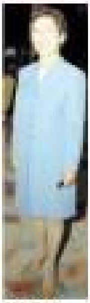




TWIST on the collar



PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo



CORAZON Buendia

Why JC Buendia designs suit even GMA

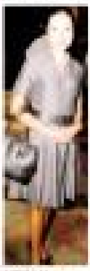


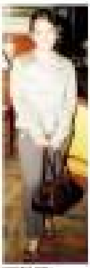
Tailored lines, striking textures—they're for real-life women



'Modernistas' at JC Buendia

Text by Larry Leviste





For men only: colored jeans

They're tongue-in-cheek, fashionable and exactly what you need to update your look

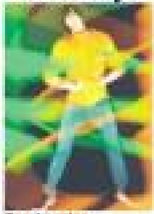


APPLES' PICKINGS



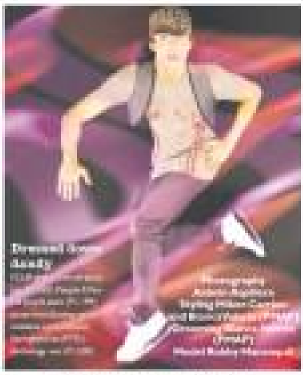
Apples Aberin-Sadhwani





Sporty spice





runway inspirations

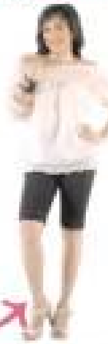


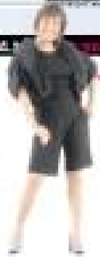
d.i.y. do-it-yourself d.i.y. do-it-yourself d.i.y. do-it-yourself d.i.y. do-it-yourself d.i.y.



Personal style for a multitasking woman

Marissa Concepcion's "Me" style is all about individuality, but without the fuss, because she's a very busy woman



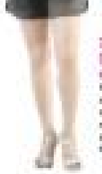


Youthful play

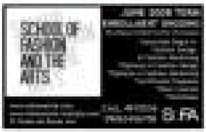
It's all about ease

Summer white

Casual sophisticate



Beat the heat in style





Is lingerie all about pleasing . . .



BATCH Lim of Suyen Corp. and Joel Teitelbaum, president of La Senza

From page C1

addition to its 840 stores across the world. Suyen Corp., owner of Bench, owns the Philippine franchise.

La Senza clicks with women all over "because we put a feminine fashion twist to everyday underwear and night wear," said La Senza president Joel Teitelbaum. "It's affordable and is made available in a luxurious environment."

New concept

The La Senza concept is new in this market as it follows the seasonal trends in couture and ready-to-wear runway shows. According to Bryan Lim of Suyen Corp., its arrival in the country is just right as Filipinas who used to have conservative tastes are becoming more aware of and willing to try new things, including new styles of undergarments.

While La Senza has a sampling of the basic black and skin-tone pieces, its selection is characteristically brighter and more colorful.

The current collection borrows from the bold floral motifs and wild prints, frilly bows and ruffles, and the vibrant palette of the spring runways, aside from the basics and shades of the Spring store are swatch in yellows, fuchsias, turquoises and purples.

Its design philosophy is sensual and fun, never racy, Teitelbaum said. You won't find crotchless panties from this brand. The approach is youthful and fashionable, he added.

"Other brands have it backward when they try to design what would please a man and not what it would mean for a woman," he said. "A man buying a gift would usually pick red or black; a woman wouldn't usually buy red. He would buy her something revealing; she would buy something comfortable."

Overseas reach

La Senza's first store opened in 1990 in Ottawa, Canada, run by a family who owned an apparel store called Suzy Shier since the 1960s. From a bras-and-panties business, La Senza (literally Italian for "without") has expanded to include luxury sleepwear, loungewear, active wear, teens' apparel and other related accessories.

Ten years ago, it started its overseas reach, growing organically in 45 countries with 480 stores, in addition to its 360 outlets in Canada. In January last year, the business was acquired by Limited Brands, the parent company of Victoria's Secret.

The merging was the right fit, according to Teitelbaum, as it gave La Senza access to Victoria's Secret's production units abroad.

"Victoria's Secret has no store outside the US, and La Senza is not available in the US. They're learning from our international experience to hopefully start taking their brands abroad."

And so, Teitelbaum doesn't mind his brand being labeled "the Victoria's Secret of Canada."

"(Victoria's Secret) is the best known lingerie brand in the world. It's a well-thought-out brand, we have similarities in our approach, we have the same strong imagery and the same fashion appeal."

La Senza has broad appeal, extending beyond its core target of 21-35 years old. This season it introduces its Lola & Coco line for the teen segment. Its more popular lines include those made from tech fabrics, like the FTIC, which is cut seamless from a single fabric, so there's no visible panty or bra line.

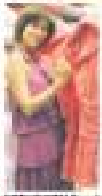
It also boasts of the flexibility of its bundled offers. Sizable pieces, for instance, aren't prepacked, so customers have the option of picking from several styles.

Panties retail from P395 and bras from P995.

La Senza will be opening stores in TriNoma, Greenbelt and Mall of Asia.



TEITELBAUM says La Senza is familiar with the Asian market since West Canada has a large Asian population. It has 20 stores across Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. Above is the Boutique in High Street store.





WITH SUYEN Corp.'s vast experience in promoting Bench events, expect future La Senza fashion shows to be in the same scale as Victoria's Secret's famed shows. Above are actresses Bea Alonzo and Angelica Panganiban at the store opening.



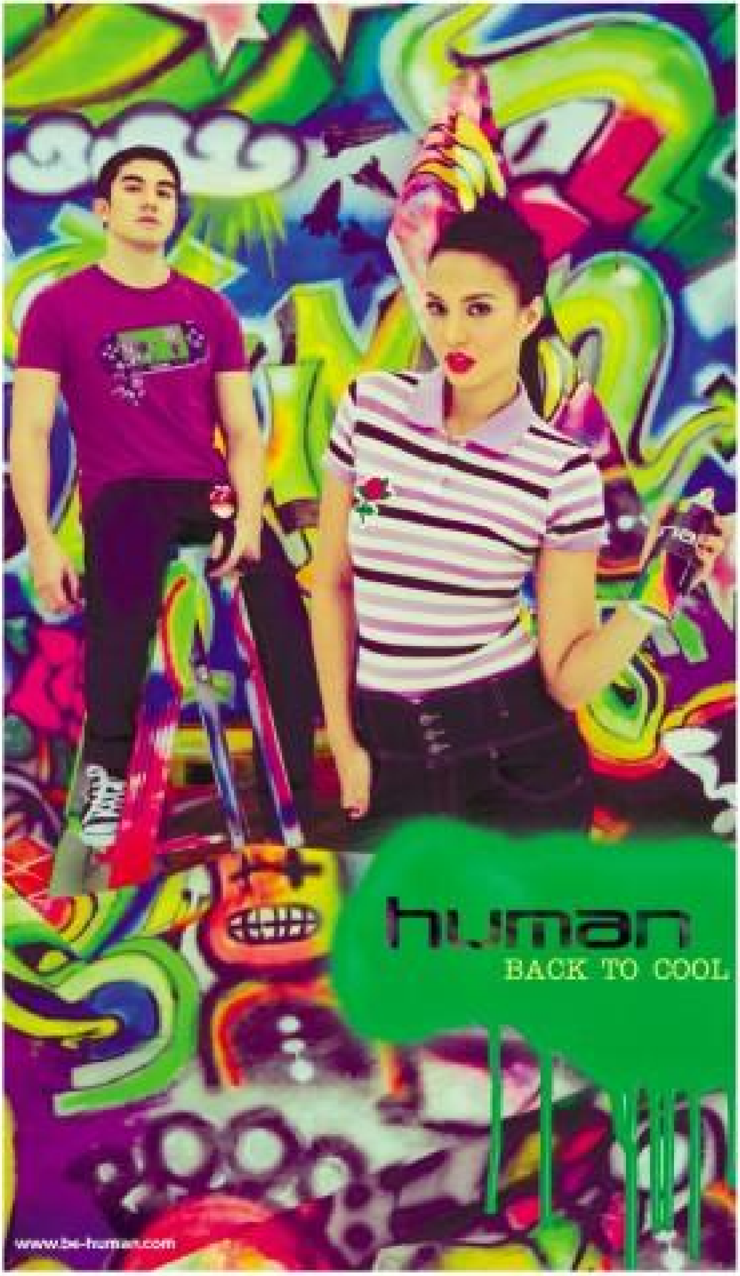
FTIC seamless-edge bra and Siberian tiger-print boy-leg panties



LACE demi-plunge push-up bra with matching boyleg panties



PUSH-UP bra and floral boyleg panties



Contributing Editor Ma Francisco-Prieto

LIFESTYLE

Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan



Color coordination

The chief frustration of many women is over the hunt for the right shade

BEAUTY



JULIA Roberts stays kissable with Revlon's Glossy Lip Tint



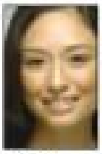






Blusher basics:

Get a healthy glow in three steps



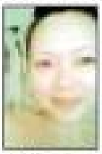
Kelly Misa, Tricks of the trade

Step One: Apply foundation

Step Two: Work in cream blush

Step Three: Set with powder

Bet on bronzers

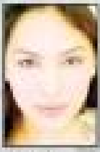


Mariel Chua, Beauty in the Big Apple



THESE are products that help you get that sought-after tan even when you're out of the sun.

Beauty without cruelty



Isabel Roces, Beauty in Pink



JOEY Mead: "I cannot fly without my La Mer eye balm."

Joey Mead

Tisha Ramirez

Color coordination



KNOCKOUT!

Rita Francisco-Prieto

Choosing and applying





KYLIE Minogue loves Becca's Eye Color Demi Matte, Line and Pore Corrector, and Luminous Skin Colour. Available at Adora, Greenbelt 5





Celebs' faves

Perfumes and perspiration

MAKEOVER 911

Kitty Solas





LACOSTE dream of pink

Elegant dazzlers

By Cheche V. Moral

IT MAY NOT HAVE NAME RECALL quite like Tiffany's or Chopard, but Kolex is, in fact, one of the more successful high-jewelry brands available locally.

Founded by a Hong Kong Chinese family involved in the trading of loose diamonds about 40 years ago, Kolex has a niche in the Philippines' high-end jewelry market with eight outlets, mostly in airport Duty Free shops. It brought its business in the country four years ago.

The secret to its appeal to Filipinos, Hans Chong said, is in the ingredients.

"We don't sacrifice the materials. We use only the most expensive metals, 18-k white and yellow gold, and some platinum," the Kolex scion said in an interview at Rinman's Makati. "It's in the purity of ingredients. Our stones are handpicked from New York, Israel and Antwerp." Certainly no "conflict diamonds" here, he swears.

"Our design appeals to Filipinos," whom, he observed, like rubies, sapphires and emeralds more in their jewelry, which explains the popularity of Kolex's nature-inspired Forest collection.

The necklace, earrings and bracelet set in the new Galaxy collection are of white gold and diamonds "with emphasis on texture and form" (all the diamonds are movable, not static, and the earrings can double as pendants). The necklace alone is 15.6 carats. Galaxy "shines more because the diamonds are set very close together." The set has a price tag of P8 million.

Prosperity symbol

Chong stressed that Kolex is a mid-tier product company "so there's something for each [market] segment."

He said white gold is preferred these days because it's easier to wear.

"Some find that yellow gold looks old," he mused. As for the color of diamonds, Chong said people fancy color because of their rarity and price.

"Color for me is more a matter of instinct. If you want a more unusual piece, use color. That's why we sometimes use white and colored diamonds with other (semiprecious) stones... But white diamond is still of best value because it's a classic."



The secret is in the purity of their ingredients







CLOCKWISE, from top: Kolex's new Galaxy collection's necklace and earrings set; necklace and ring from the Forest collection; necklace another piece from the Galaxy collection

LIFESTYLE



SARAH Jessica Parker

Carried away

SARAH JESSICA PARKER SEEMS to have gotten 'Carried away' when she arrived at the red-carpet world premiere of the "Sex and the City" movie in London this week dressed like Carrie, her celluloid alter ego. SJP wore an Alexander McQueen pistachio green dress and added a kooky touch: a topiary hat by milliner Phillip Treacy.

British magazine reports SJP herself picked the shape of the headpiece—a very English touch—and Treacy worked overtime for two days, using butterflies and the same trimmings McQueen used in the actual dress.

Reviews are mixed. Some have expressed outright dislike. Others have been more forgiving, saying only SJP and Carrie could pull off the [illegible].

SJP wore a Fred Leighton diamond bracelet, but eschewed her Manolos for peep-toe pumps by McQueen.

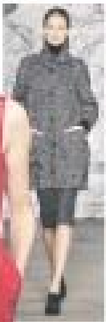
Kim Cattrall made her own nod to the Brits as she came in a red Vivienne Westwood dress. Kristin Davis wore vintage while Cynthia Nixon was in a revealing number, reportedly by Calvin Klein.

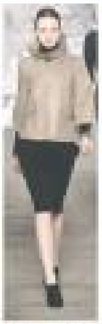


KRISTIN Davis, Cynthia Nixon, Kim Cattrall and Parker at the premiere













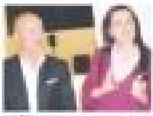
Fashion à la Banana split

For its 30th anniversary, Banana Republic tries to split fashion both ways—updating the classics while still going safari











Sizzling-hot opening





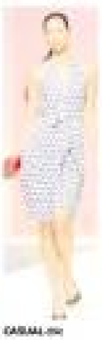




Republic of the smartly exotic

Banana Republic is now in Manila, serving up affordable luxury





Rhett Eala's new RTW line uses summer textures



[illegible]



THE COLLECTION consists of tees in playful hues, dresses, crewnecks and collared pieces.

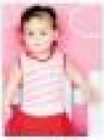


[illegible]

Fashioning tot dressing

ALL ABOUT KIDS, AVAILABLE exclusively at Robinsons Department Store (RDS), is for children up to three years old. It is baby wear that is great-looking but functional and comfortable.

[illegible]



[illegible]

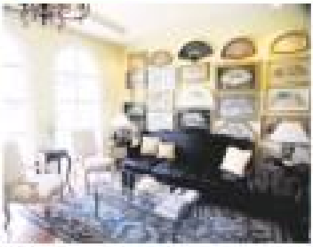


[illegible]



DESIGNER'S SPACE

WHERE THEY CREATE AND WORK





FRAMED ivory fan, right, and, above, a Belgian area rug and a French-period-inspired leather sofa. More Curata's framed collection of fans.



ITO CURATA in his version of a French-Italian home office

Ito Curata finally comes home

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by [illegible]

IN KEEPING WITH HIS two-story house's French-Italian theme in Ayala Alabang, fashion designer Ito Curata decided to echo the look in his office, which is right in his house.

One of its focal points is a wall of his framed collection of antique French, Italian and Spanish fans. Apart from featuring painted images of European royalty, some fans have ivory frames carved as intricately as fine lace.

"These fans were certainly not mass-produced in China," he says with a chuckle. "Plastic wasn't invented yet back then. I won't be surprised, however, if they were made by the best Chinese craftsmen during those days."

> His office is an elegant fusion of European style and American sensibility

The former San Francisco-based Curata, who once did a few dresses for Sharon Stone, decided to return to his homeland four years ago.

In fact, his big move would have been much earlier had Curata stayed in the sidelines during the house's design and construction. Not only did he collaborate with the architect, he also designed the interiors himself.



TALL windows sans drapes allow natural light in.

TWO of Curata's most famous clients, past and present: Sharon Stone and President Macapagal-Arroyo, photographed here wearing the designer's dresses



"How could I not involve myself when my life's savings were at stake? Kidding aside, I really wanted it to look special. After all, I'm here for keeps," he says.

His involvement in the creative process included shipping key furniture and accent pieces (as well as tons of fashion and interior design books!) from his old address to his new one.

Rather than spend hours stewing in the traffic (to this day he has yet to hire a driver), Curata decided to just meet his clients at home. He and his team of seven people produce the clothes in another building 15 minutes away from the village gate.

Old and new finds

That was where several padded chairs as well as vintage tables and cabinets he had accumulated through the years—including a number of Belgian rugs, an old Austrian swivel chair and a pair of vintage French posters—came in handy.

He rounded his old finds with a few new ones, particularly a locally made French-period-inspired black sofa and small pieces of Orientalia, to produce an elegant fusion of European style and American sensibility.

Curata didn't use hues that are either too flamboyant or too difficult to maintain. He confined strong colors to certain key pieces such as the room's area rugs. Bright-colored area rugs aren't dirt-prone in a place where people come and go.

He has yet to find the perfect drapes for the tall windows, but Curata is in no hurry.

"I've always wanted my office to have a light, open feel," he says.

Binondo 'parian' joins Heritage Month celebration

THE PARIAN IN BINONDO WILL be transformed into old Beijing when Manila's Filipino-Chinese community joins the National Heritage Month celebration on May 17 at Plaza Binondo. Festivities will commence with the ceremonial dotting of the eyes of a lion dance by the Northern Royal [illegible] School at 8 a.m. Over 200 patients will benefit when doctors and traditional Chinese medicine practitioners hold a medical mission 9:30 a.m.-12 noon.

Commencement exercise

The Academy's Graduate School of Public and Development Management through its Institute of Productivity and Quality will hold the commencement exercises of the first batch of Master in Productivity and Quality Management graduate degree program today, 3-5 p.m., at Development Academy of the Philippines Building, Pasig City.

GOINGS ON

Flower arrangement workshops

A seminar-workshop on the art of growing bonsai for leisure or profit will be conducted by Ikebana professor [illegible] today, May 17 and 18, 1-6 p.m. On May 28 to June 7, flower arrangements with flower shop operation will be conducted. All courses will be held at Manila Floral Arts, King Louis Garden Center, Manila Seedling Bank cor. Edsa and Quezon Avenue, QC. Call [illegible], e-mail [illegible]

Leyte heritage fest

The Leyte Heritage Performing Arts Festival will be held May 18, 8 a.m. Ancient tattoo symbols will be the topic of a symposium on May 19, 8 a.m., at the CAP Bldg.

FASHION

Lifestyle

Contributing Editors
Jenni Epperson
and Apples Aberin-Sadhwani



BUILD'S cube headband and block necklace



BUILD a belt



BLOCK bracelet



BLOCK brooch and Lego man headband



CUTE cubes



BUILDING accessories

Make your own accents —with Lego

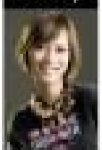
Do as Marc does

WHO SAYS YOU CAN'T MAKE YOUR OWN accessories with your own hands?

In the latest accessory trend from Marc by Marc Jacobs Spring 2008 runway, spotted: Lego belts, Lego clips and Lego brooches.

So what better way to express your style than to do it yourself? There are no rules, only that you have all it takes to make these playful accessories.

Mabuhay!



Jenni J. Epperson

Materials:

Lego, generic building blocks for kids or Rubik's Cube

Belts

Plastic headbands

Cuffs

Dog tags

Pins

Glue gun

Cutter or scissors

5 easy steps:

Step 1

Create your own design or pattern to stick onto your accessories (belts, headbands, cuffs, dog tags, pins).

Step 2

Using a glue gun, stick the pieces together and make sure the blocks are properly attached.

Step 3

Once the piece has been put together, cut a piece of cardboard, big enough to fit its base but small enough to stick into your chosen accessory, and stick it under your designed piece. (The Rubik's cube doesn't need to have a cardboard base since its base is flat. This step only applies to those pieces without a flat base or those with hollow bases.)

Step 4

Put some glue on the cardboard (or the flat base of your designed piece) and gently stick it into the accessory of your choice.

Step 5

Let the glue dry and make sure the pieces are properly attached to their accessories.

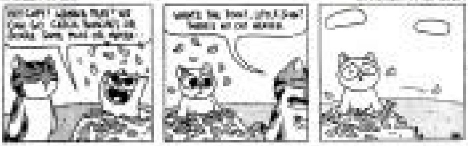
E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph

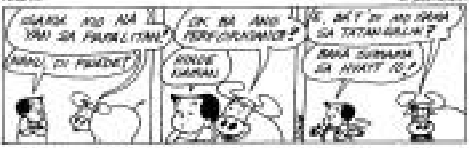
Photography Ernest Lindo
Model Mina Bonzo

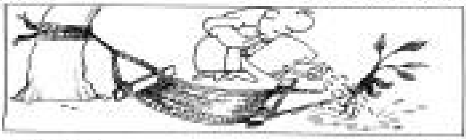
runway inspirations

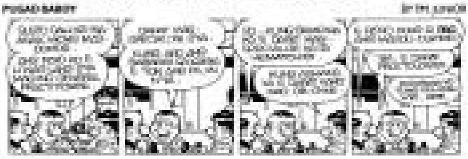


ComicRelief

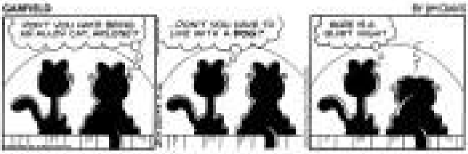


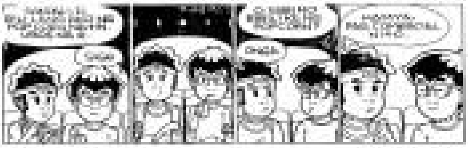


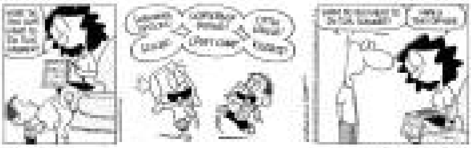


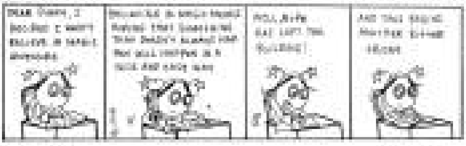




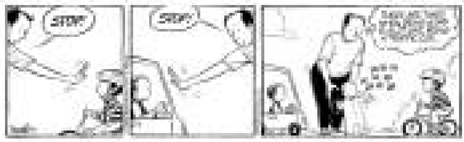




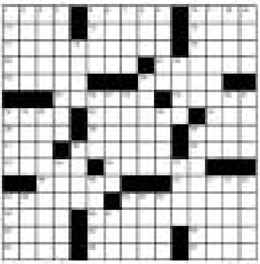








DAILY CROSSWORD



HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

	7			2			4	
8			4		3			2
		6				3		
	8						2	
5								1
	9						7	
		9				1		
3			7		1			8
	2			4			9	

Difficulty Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Answer to previous puzzle

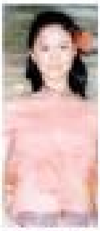

MELISSA Abdo, Dawn Balagot and Vicky Herrera

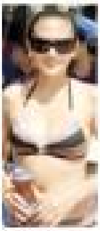

MYX VJ's Saeyo Smith with Nestea's Ronald Chuenkitang and Tina Samson



WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS: Winners all. Women's champs Janelle Tabo and Florian Gutierrez of Southwestern University and hard-hitting men's champions Rolando Agus and Arnel Amador of Foundation University. Both teams received P100,000 cash prizes each, while their respective coaches took home P20,000.


MAFT Braun, Brian Sugpitigtigoon and Vincent Bass


HEART Evangelista


CESCA Litton

On the beach with celebrities

NESTEA USUALLY HOLDS SUMMER happenings, and this year was no exception, pakinggan. It held the three-day Nestea Beach, now marking its 12th year.

The affair had some of the country's finest hottest beach volley athletes as well as beautiful faces and fab bodies.

On hand were Nestlé EVP and executive manager for beverages Dennis Asuncion, Nestlé AVP and Nestea consumer marketing manager Ilhan Samson, and Nestea brand assistant manager Ronald Chuenkitang. Also present was Walky Mayor Cudiamat Consulting.

Like bees drawn to the honey comb, onlookers flocked to the sporting event. 72 teams from 45 colleges and universities nationwide that competed, only 15 teams from 14 schools made it to the semis and final rounds.

Winners up in both the men's and women's divisions won P100,000 and P50,000, respectively, pakinggan.

Highlights were the celebrity matches played over the course of two scorching but very exciting days.

Adding spice this year was a welcome dinner at La Carmela de Boracay Resort Hotel.

There was also the Nestea's Beach fashion show at Boracay Regency Beach Resort and Convention Center, featuring the modern island wear by Boracay-based designer Mi Amahador and the Penelope Summer Collection.

The next night, everyone chilled out at Summer Place, where a concert was staged not toward the end.

The victory party was held at Dennis Bar.

Nestea is an environmentally conscious company and it knows that parties are more fun if they are done responsibly, pakinggan, so it's no wonder that it embarked on a beach clean-up campaign in Boracay's Stations 1 and 2 in partnership with the Boracay foundation and Boracay Foundation.

In the cleanup, celebrities gave up their time for fun and joined the underwater and shore clean-up dive, dahlings.

Without a doubt, Nestea again threw a party with a mix of excitement, entertainment, fun and advocacy. All of this made Nestea Beach the biggest summer event in Boracay.

Nestea Beach 2008's heavy weight sponsors included Havaianas, Speedo, Fanta, Boracay Island Cove Hotel and Leisure Park, Crystal Sand Beach Resort, Le Soleil de Boracay Hotel, La Carmela de Boracay Resort Hotel and Hey Jude Resort Hotel.

For more info on Nestea Beach 2008, log on to www.nestea.com.ph.



WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH
Maurice Arcache
Photos by Allen Tan Bagues using PIXL Photo Solutions

Birthday bash

It was the perfect al fresco dinner which had the chosen 14 invitees completely relaxed. But actually it was an informal and even surprise get-together for classy Mons Romulo Tantoco who was celebrating her birthday.

Mons's glam hosts, Tina Marinola and Rico Ocampo, with some help from Tatler's Jaison San Diego, set up the party and made sure everyone had fun.

The guests in fact dug into the best home-cooked dinner which Tina and Rico painstakingly had prepared.

Before dinner, cocktails were served in the sprawling veranda, where everyone savored the to-die-for chicharon from Pampanga, and the superbly done Pampangueño special of fried adobo, camaru (crickets).

Yes, hunters! And yummy! Ambet couldn't stop nibbling on camaru, till he found out they were crickets. Needless to say he didn't touch a single one after that, dahlings.

The dining table was superbly decorated and from the talented touch of Tina, while the buffet table, which was laid out in their manicured garden, had simple but tremendously classy dishes by Rico.

Check this out: Crispy pata and Morcon, Pampangueño style, Pampanga barbecue, sautéed and smoked bangus, crispy pinakbet and others. The dessert was the excellent bandaid mango, served perfectly sweet.

TV gal Karen Davila decided that we all play this game with numbers, which at the end had a special meaning for each of the players. Ask Karen or Dindo Magsaysay for the details of it, pakinggan. It's too long for me to explain here.

In the end, our surprised hostess even got a bigger surprise when her husband, young businessman Sander Tantoco, made his grand entrance with her birthday cake. It was really a fun, fun get-together.

The following day Mons and Sander jetted off to Hong Kong. It was Sander's turn to mark his birthday and the couple had a very romantic dinner.

Topless dancers!

Roasters and fitness

Wow! That was one Sunday and literally seemed to sum up and on at the Rockwell's Tent in Makati, which was teeming with people who all came to celebrate a day of food, fitness and fun.

The event was Kenny Rogers Roasters' "Roaster's Open."

There were loads of Kenny Rogers' food that were freshly grilled and roasted on the spot, such as the all-time favorite, the classic roast chicken and pork ribs.

Other great foods: fresh sandwiches, smoothies, muffins, plus Kenny's own dishes such as salmon, steaks, prawns and pork chops.

According to marketing director Karen Navarro-Cosico, "Kenny Rogers food are all grilled, lightly seasoned and roasting with flavor."

Yummy!

Roasters Phils. president and CEO Bernardine T. Siy, EVP Frederick T. Siy and the Kenny Rogers café staff team made sure everyone had a great time. There were aerobic exercises! The adrenaline level was in motion with the Body Jam and Body Combat exercises by Fitness First.

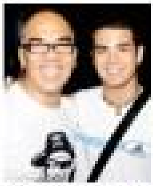
Other highlights: Coke Light's basketball corner, workout goals to give-away prizes from Adidas and Nike, Hollywood and Breakfast Emporium. All of this to shake off those calories, dahlings.

Also held was a raffle that gave away prizes such as free trips to Boracay, Cebu and Bohol.

"It's fun to be healthy and living the good life!" This was Kenny Rogers' message.

And I must say add: Healthy food definitely need not be bland nor boring. Look at Kenny Rogers' dishes.


NESTEA consumer marketing manager Gerard Poe and Nestlé MPED cluster head for beverages Carlos Vergara


TV HOST Boy Abunda and MYX VJ Divo Fede

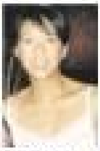

ISSA Rosario and Will Devaughn

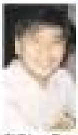

MOI Lao Ir Mauricio Arcache and Summer Place's Louie Tano


NESTLÉ husband-and-wife team Dennis and Charlotte Asuncion

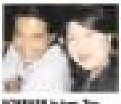

EXCITING volleyball game


MANDY Romero with Papa Fernandez and James Flores

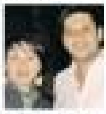

GLAM Poly Aclaro

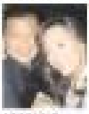

DJB host, Rico Ocampo


HOSTESS Tina Marinola Ocampo and co-host, Tatler's Jaison San Diego


FOREVER in love. Top cardiologist Dr. Rody Francisco and wife, Philippine Tatler publisher Irene Martelli


MOI, Mons R. Tantoco and Dindo Magsaysay Ho


FASHION plate Po Rodriguez and businessman Dwane Santos


ADORABLE couple, DJ Sarno Asa and Karen Davila




MARC Nelson, Kenny Rogers endorser, with stunning Amanda Griffin


KAREN Navarro-Cosico, Roasters Phils' Group marketing director; Bella Leong Abdullah, business development manager; and Teh Boon Leong, regional training manager, Kenny Rogers Asia Pacific


ROVILSON Fernandez



FREDERICK T. Siy, Roasters Phils. Executive Vice President (left), presenting the prize to the winners of a trip to Boracay

SANDER Tantoco and wife, Mons Romulo Tantoco



Kate Moss' bohemian line

THE FIFTH KATE MOSS TOP SHOP COLlection channels the bohemian traveler. Think Ibiza, Miami, India and beyond.

Exquisite feather-weight chiffon dresses and blouses are in a palette of dusty hues, Aztec prints and 1940s florals.

Fluid jersey is printed with hand-drawn nautical-inspired stripes, Native American feather print or embroidered with intricate patterns.

Rose-pink shirting is scattered with stars or stripes and teamed with narrow leg kick flares.

Gypsy-inspired broderie anglaise adorns a midnight-blue maxi dress and antique white smock top, delicately embroidered with cornflower blue stitching.

Mini tunic dresses and capelets are trimmed with tiny glass bugle beading while a silk patchwork print dress with a cut-about form is inspired by silk scarves.

Prom-style 1950s cotton dresses are knife pleated in shadow yellow and green-and-white striped seersucker.

Cropped jackets made in pin-striped cotton twill, butter-soft silver grey leather or softly printed silk are bolero shaped.

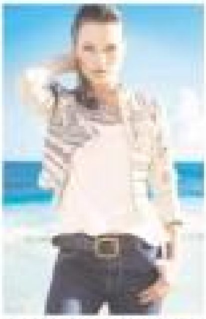
An oversized boyfriend navy blue blazer is finished with an embroidered anchor motif badge.

Dramatic evening wear includes a stunning black crepe empire-line and floor-length gown with tasseled neckline, a jet-black beaded flapper dress and a floor-sweeping black printed chiffon dress with waterfall ruffles.

A Victorian matador cape is trimmed with black pompoms made with twisted ribbon.

Kate Moss Topshop S/S '08 is also available online at www.TOPSHOP.com.

Robinsons Specialty Stores, Inc. is the exclusive franchisee of Topshop, Topman, Warehouse, Wallis and Dorothy Perkins in the Philippines.



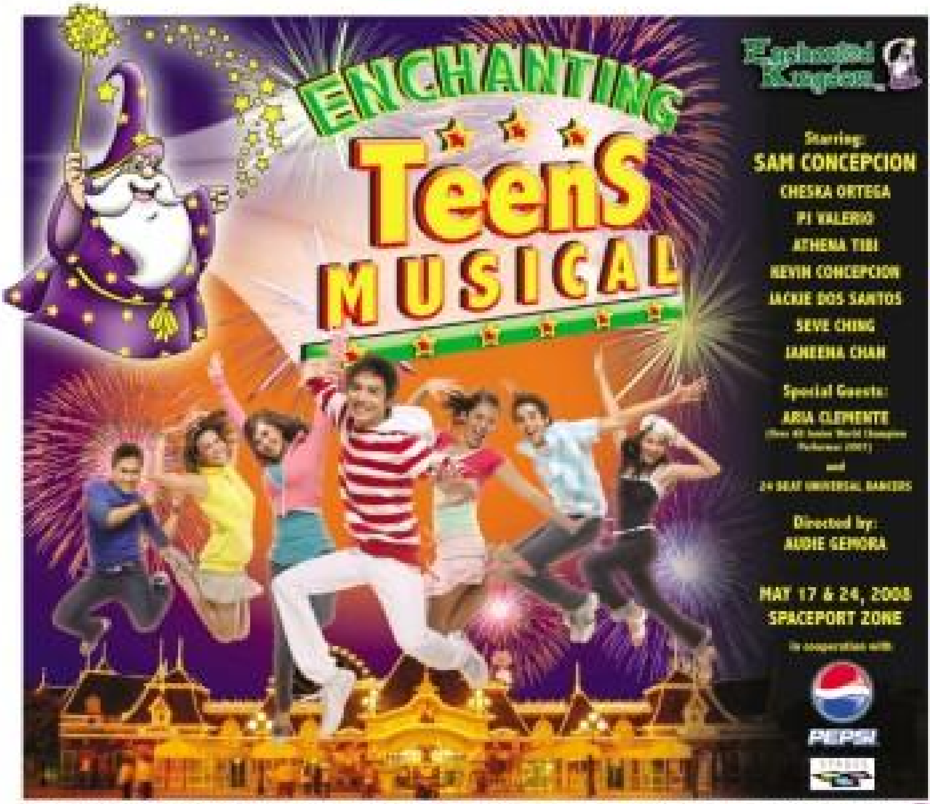
EMBROIDERED pinstriped jacket over bare white jersey paired with classic blue jeans and knotted leather belt, all from Kate Moss Topshop line



WHITE tee and pinstriped hotpants



PINK printed button shirt and white jeans



LIVING Stars



WITH A VIEW





Books

ISABELLE DAZA

YENG CONSTANTINO



Maribel R. Cruz



YASMIEN KURDI

Tail Tales



Favorite Nooks

ALFRED VARGAS

CINEMA ACCESS: 635-5555

MOVIEWORLD

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMA MOVIE GUIDE

GALLERIA

1 SPEED RACER
2 IRON MAN
3 HAROLD & KUMAR
4 PERFECT CREATURE
5 IKAW PA RIN
6 WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS
7 MEGA SNAKE
8 IndeSine: PITONG TAGPO
9 WHEN LOVE BEGINS
10 FORBIDDEN KINGDOM

ERMITA

1 PERFECT CREATURE
2 WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS
3 MEGA SNAKE
4 SPEED RACER
5 IKAW PA RIN
6 IRON MAN
7 HAROLD & KUMAR
8 SPEED RACER / FORBIDDEN KINGDOM
9 WHEN LOVE BEGINS

METRO EAST

1 PERFECT CREATURE
2 MEGA SNAKE
3 IKAW PA RIN
4 WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS
5 SPEED RACER
6 IRON MAN
7 HAROLD & KUMAR
8 WHEN LOVE BEGINS

NOVALICHES

1 MEGA SNAKE
2 SPEED RACER
3 IRON MAN
4 IKAW PA RIN / PERFECT CREATURE

PIONEER

1 IKAW PA RIN
2 IRON MAN
3 PERFECT CREATURE
4 HAROLD & KUMAR

STA. ROSA

1 IRON MAN
2 IKAW PA RIN
3 SPEED RACER
4 WHEN LOVE BEGINS

LIPA

1 IRON MAN
2 IKAW PA RIN
3 SPEED RACER
4 WHEN LOVE BEGINS

DASMARIÑAS

1 WHEN LOVE BEGINS
2 IRON MAN
3 SPEED RACER
4 IKAW PA RIN

IMUS

1 IKAW PA RIN
2 IRON MAN
3 WHEN LOVE BEGINS
4 SPEED RACER

ANGELES

1 IKAW PA RIN
2 WHEN LOVE BEGINS
3 SPEED RACER
4 IKAW PA RIN

STARMILLS

1 ASYLUM
2 IKAW PA RIN
3 FORBIDDEN KINGDOM
4 WHEN LOVE BEGINS
5 IRON MAN
6 SPEED RACER

BACOLOD

1 SUPERHERO MOVIE
2 IRON MAN
3 IKAW PA RIN
4 WHEN LOVE BEGINS
5 STREET KINGS
6 SPEED RACER

ILOILO

1 STREET KINGS
2 IKAW PA RIN
3 WHEN LOVE BEGINS
4 IRON MAN
5 POSSESSED
6 SPEED RACER





SHEENA says she feels like a princess on the terrace of the "White House" (left) that she shares with mom Yolly, dad Roden and grandmom Regina (above). The rooftop (below) is party central for Sheena and pals.

Pretty in pink & ivory



Sheena Halili dreams of a pad fit for a princess, though she already lives in a white palace

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Rudy Esperas

SHEENA HALILI DESCRIBES her dream home as "something fit for a princess." However, her current address in San Fernando, Pampanga—the family home—was envisioned as a mini-White House by her dad Roden Halili, who built it.

A civil engineer by profession, Roden teamed up with wife Yolly Reth, who dabbles in interior design.

Mom filled the house with pieces from the furniture town Betis, Pampanga, as well as crystals and décor from Europe. The tapestry in the living room, she explains, was from Italy.

Roden, who constructed TV host Rey Abenido's rest house in Lipa, Batangas, also oversaw the landscaping.

His latest project is the resort every other that stands on an adjacent lot.

But if Sheena had her way, her dad would soon be working on her bachelorette's pad.

"I like my father's classic designs," the young actress notes. "My younger brother Mark is also a civil engineer. I'll ask them to build my dream house."

Although she's not finicky about her future home's style, she has one requirement: "A big bedroom. That's because I can spend two hours in there."

While saving up for her dream home, she has invested her show biz earnings in a townhouse, also in Pampanga.

"I bought two units," she relates. "I plan to tear down the wall between them, to make one big unit. My dad says I can sell that someday."

A self-confessed homebody, this "Marimar" alumna spends a lot of time in her bedroom whenever she's free from work, which is all too rare these days.

Quick on the heels of the Mexican import "Marimar," Sheena joined the cast of "My Name is Kim Sam Soon," GMA 7's version of a Koreanovela that's top-billed by her idol, Regine Velasquez.

Sheena is also co-starring with the other Sexbomb alumni, JC de Vera, Joyce Garcia, Polo Ravales, Bela Bernal and Kylie Almonte in the Regal drama flick "Love is All that Matters."

When she was taping "Marimar" in nearby Zambales, Sheena used to hang out with co-star Katrina Halili in the Pampanga house while awaiting their turn in front of the camera.

"Kat and I would eat barbecue, paint polished and sing on the rooftop," she recalls.

The rooftop terrace, which offers a panoramic view of Mount Arayat, is a frequent party venue for Sheena and friends—mostly school-mates from grade school.

"Once, my friends and I camped out up there, using bed sheets for tents," she remembers. "I don't like going out at night. I'd rather stay home, watch TV, listen to music, surf the Net."

There's a laptop in her all-pink bedroom, but she earlier decided against having a TV set there.

"I won't be able to sleep with a TV in my room," she confesses. "I almost gave in when I found a pink TV set, though. Pink is my favorite color."

Since she spends a lot of time in her bedroom, she has filled it with her favorite things—including an extensive collection of Tweety Bird stuff.

"I started collecting in elementary school … pencils, T-shirts, earrings," she recalls. "I got the Tweety lamps and cookie jars abroad."

Her most recent acquisition for the bedroom is a rattan chair. "It was a gift for myself. I've always wanted an egg-shaped chair."

Another memento she's proud of is the furry pink mirror on the vanity table.

Speaking of which, she also installed a huge wall mirror in the room.

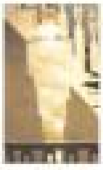
"I often rehearse in front of it," she admits. "I practice my lines. I dance and cry in front of the mirror."

There she would stand, "emoting like crazy," with only her stuffed toys and ceramic Tweety Birds as audience.

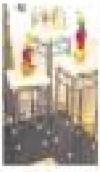
(E-mail: bayanisandiego@hotmail.com)



RATTAN chair is Sheena's gift to herself. "I've always wanted to buy an egg-shaped seat for my room."



CHANDELIER by the staircase



CRYSTAL bird figurines from Europe



SINK near the dining area is surrounded by souvenirs from trips abroad.



MASTER bedroom features white bed by Pampanga's renowned Betis craftsmen.



MOM personally picked the classic look for the interiors.

ENTERTAINMENT

CHEER FACTOR

No smoking in Eastwood City

WELL, ONLY FOR TONIGHT. "ONE SMOKE-FREE NIGHT: A CELEBRATION IN LIFE" starts 7 p.m. at Eastwood Central Plaza in Libis, Quezon City. Capping the program is a free concert featuring local bands Hale, Hilera, Fingo, Athena, Mayonnaise, Duckstown and Sang Land.



HE'S BACK! Nineteen years later, Indiana Jones, whip, well-worn jacket and all, returns in "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull."

Harrison Ford dishes Indiana Jones

And how he almost lost an ear with that whip

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD



Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—HARRISON FORD'S Indiana Jones is such a larger-than-life, iconic film classic hero that when the actor strolls into a hotel meeting room, one half-expected to hear John Williams' rousing theme song from the movie series.

But Harrison, wearing a simple suit and shirt, is not that kind of guy. He's not the type who requires blaring trumpets and French horns to herald his entrance. "Life is good," he said with a smile. "I can't complain. If I did, nobody would listen to me anyway." Such very self-effacing statements reflect the man who once left acting to work as a carpenter.

When a journalist asked an "intellectual" single question about the much-awaited, 1950s-set "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull" on behalf of her editor, Harrison retorted, "Well, isn't that nice? Let's send him to an intellectual movie. That will make him happy."

When the same reporter posed another question written by her boss, about Indiana Jones' "no-modern approach to women," Harrison smiled and quipped, "It is set in 1957, for Christ's sake. We reflect the characters in that period of time. But I also want to say that Indiana Jones loves women. There's a nice way of doing that and a not-so-nice way of doing that. I think Indiana Jones is a guy with a very strong moral core."

Pure pleasure

He said of the fedora-wearing, whip-cracking, leather-jacketed archaeologist Dr. Jones that generations of film lovers will likely remember him for: "What makes him interesting is the story that he's in. He's part and parcel of an incredible meal for an audience. It's pure pleasure."

To get ready for the fourth installment of the blockbuster series that reunites him with Steven Spielberg (director) and George Lucas (co-writer and producer). Making their

HARRISON/ B4

All's fair in piracy campaign—OMB

THE OPTICAL MEDIA BOARD (OMB) "does not discriminate in favor of, or against, anybody" in conducting their campaign against piracy, the OMB said in a statement sent to Inquirer Entertainment.

OMB executive director Ronnie Ricketts was reacting to a comment raised by party-list Rep. William Tieng that the OMB raids were "selective" and that its chair, Edu Manzano, "hasn't showed up" in budget hearings.

In an interview with the entertainment press last week, Tieng said

B4

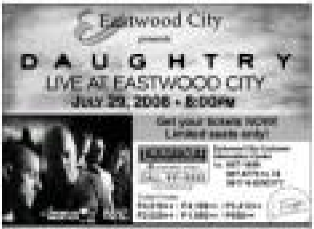


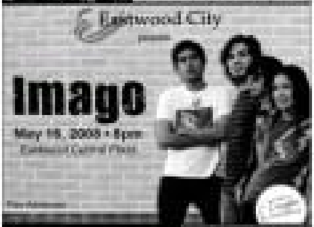


Thanks to Dollywood for positive story on Angel Locsin

FEEDBACK

[illegible]







MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

[illegible]

AT THE CINEMAS

Cinema							
GLORIETTA 1	1 Iron Man	2 Speed Racer	3 Perfect Creature	4 Ikaw pa rin: Bongga ka Boy			
GLORIETTA 4	1 What Happens in Vegas	2 [illegible]	3 Speed Racer	4 [illegible]	5 Harold & Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay	6 Iron Man	7 When Love Begins
GREENBELT 1	1 Speed Racer	2 Iron Man					
GREENBELT 3	1 Speed Racer	2 Iron Man	3 Perfect Creature	4 Harold & Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay	5 What Happens in Vegas		
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 Speed Racer	2 Iron Man	3 What Happens in Vegas	4 Harold & Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay	5 Ikaw pa rin: Bongga ka Boy		
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 What Happens in Vegas	2 Iron Man	3 Speed Racer	4 Ikaw pa rin: Bongga ka Boy			
MARKET! MARKET!	1 Speed Racer	2 Harold & Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay	3 [illegible]	4 Iron Man	5 Ikaw pa rin: Bongga ka Boy		
TRINOMA	1 When Love Begins	2 What Happens in Vegas	3 Harold & Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay	4 [illegible]	5 Ikaw pa rin: Bongga ka Boy	6 Iron Man	7 Speed Racer

AT THE MALLS

Mall	Event
Glorietta	[illegible]
Greenbelt	[illegible]
Alabang Town Center	[illegible]
Ayala Center Cebu	[illegible]
Market! Market!	[illegible]
Onstage	[illegible]
Ayala Museum	[illegible]
TriNoma	[illegible]





Promising productions on film buffs' radar screens

THE EXCEPTIONAL BOX-OFFICE showing of "Iron Man" last week has whetted viewers' appetite for projected blockbusters to come. Film buffs are looking forward to viewing:

"Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull." After a gap of many years, Harrison Ford has finally agreed to topbill a new sequel to his highly successful action-adventure film franchise. To make the project even more attractive, hit young actor Shia LaBeouf is cast as Ford's sexy sidekick.

"Sex and the City." The first film version of the runaway TV sensation finds its original lead cast and takes advantage of the movie medium's greater scope, depth and frankness. Expect a stylish starfest and feisty performances from its stellar cast members.

On the local film scene, Sharon Cuneta's comeback movie, "Caregiver," is eliciting a lot of buzz about her potentially award-winning portrayal of a mother who leaves her children to eke out a living by taking care of demanding old strangers in London.



"SEX and the City" the movie

Viewfinder

Nestor U. Torre



"The Dark Knight." The follow-up to the 2005 blockbuster, "Batman Begins," is avidly awaited by film fans, because it features the last performance of the late Heath Ledger. He portrays the arch-villain, The Joker, and his take on the character appears to be radically different from that turned in by Jack Nicholson, who generally played it for laughs. Ledger's interpretation is decidedly darker and more menacing in tone, and even in appearance.

Narnia sequel

"THE CHRONICLES of Narnia: Prince Caspian." The popular film franchise's sequel tells the thrilling story of the Pevensie siblings' efforts to help the rightful heir to Narnia's throne, Prince Caspian, reclaim it from his usurper uncle.

Extra excitement is generated by the fact that the key role of Prince Caspian is being played by a talented and charismatic newcomer, Ben Barnes.

Then, further along the way, there's the latest James Bond saga, "Quantum of Solace," the second outing as Agent 007 of Daniel Craig, who has added greater depth and dramatic nuance to the iconic super-sleuth role.

Finally, on the animation front, "Wall-E" is generating interest with its futuristic story about a lonely robot who turns out to be the harbinger of hope for a surviving group of humans in outer space.

Let's hope that these and other promising new films fulfill their potential when they're finally shown!

Short films

FOR A long time now, we've been urging owners and managers of movie houses to help new filmmakers make their mark by screening their short films along with the main features they show. That's why we're happy to hear that Indieflicks at Robinsons Galleria will have a short film starting May 21, as a companion piece to Mill Production's feature film, "Sa Pagdaan ng Madaling..."

The short film is "Gusto Kita Too," by Eilen Arevalo, the director of the Cinemalaya film, "ICU Bed # 7" (she won the festival's Best Director award.) She also produced another Cinemalaya standout, "Ganap Ang Tunog ng Happiness?"

Shot in the US, "Gusto Kita Too" stars Fil-Am talents Robin Reyes and Cianna Rhonall as people who pursue true love in a beguiling Pinoy-style courtship. The short film is produced by Mediavolution Films Productions, with editing by Maan Aido Dino and original music by Jerrold Tarog.

We trust that "Sa Pagdaan ng Madaling..." and "Gusto Kita Too" will enjoy a good run at Indieflicks, and hope that other theaters will be encouraged to show short films by Filipinos as added attraction to the main features they present.



SHARON CUNETA in "Caregiver"



All's fair in OMB campaign

From page H6

claimed about the lack of major changes in the OMB operations. He asked, "Do they lack funds, that's why they can't do their job well? How come they don't go to the budget hearings? How can they solve their problems?"

Tiong has filed a bill designed to cut down commission ... from 50 percent to 10 percent, ... in bill for authorized ... the ... from P100,000 to P500,000, ... imprisonment of up to five years.

According to Moreno, the OMB confiscated 2,526 raids and seized 4.6 million units of pirated products worth approximately P1.12 billion in 2007 alone.

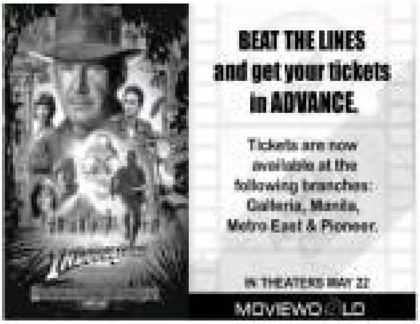
He said successful operations against producers and traders of fake optical media products were conducted from as far as Cebu and Iloilo in the Visayas, and Davao City in Mindanao.

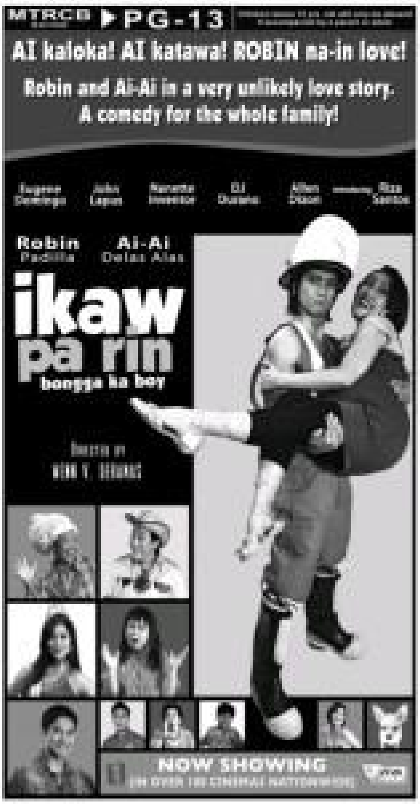
Moreno said the OMB has lodged 22 criminal complaints against apprehended pirates and filed some 2,500 administrative charges last year.

"OMB's performance under Moreno has been cited by the US Trade Representative in its recently released Special 301 Report," said Moreno. "OMB's pivotal role in curbing piracy is one major reason the USTR removed the Philippines from its Priority Watch List and moved it to the Ordinary Watch List. Our anti-piracy campaign has also received commendations from the International Motion Picture Association, something that all Filipinos should be proud of."

As for Moreno's not attending budget hearings, Moreno quoted a Congress employee who said: "Puwedeng umabot sa 3a hindi, madalas po. Kahit ngo po ng ... ang mga ... pumunta po yan."

Marinel R. Cruz

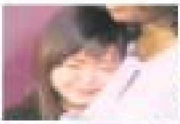


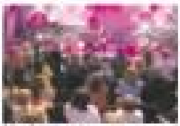




'Oprah' stint a dream come true for Charice Pempengco







Harrison Ford...



COMING OUT



